



Arizona Communications Unit Training Coordination Procedure

Developed by Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) NIMS-CU Workgroup

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Arizona Communications Unit Training Coordination Procedure

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document describes the procedure for coordinating All-Hazards Communications Unit Training in Arizona. It serves as a guide for offering consistent and timely delivery of Training Courses to qualified individuals statewide.

This procedure defines who appropriate instructors for this training are, how Arizona will develop a group of OEC approved Arizona based instructors and how individuals or agencies request Communications Unit Training.

1.2 Definitions

A Communications Unit Leader (COML) is defined by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as a person that plans and manages the technical and operational aspects of the communications function during an all-hazards incident or event. The COML plays a critical role within the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

A Communications Unit Technician (COMT) is defined by DHS as a person responsible for managing Strategic Technology Reserve (STR) or other communication assets, such as a radio cache, mobile communications vehicle or other deployable communications assets, during all-hazards operations within the Incident Command System (ICS) organizational structure.

1.3 Background

DHS has created a Communications Unit Training course for COMLs and is in the process of launching a similar course for COMTs. DHS has empowered each State to develop their own All-Hazards Communications Unit recognition and training programs and has provided a best practices guide that Arizona has reviewed.

To date, Arizona has developed a formal COML recognition program. The Arizona Regional COML Recognition Program was developed by the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee (SIEC) Communications Unit working group staffed and supported by the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Office. After a public review period, SIEC approved the process on May 18, 2010. The Program was then approved by the Public Safety Communications Advisory Commission (PSCC) on July 20, 2010.

The National Incident Management System Communications Unit (NIMS-CU) Workgroup called for by this recognition program was formed and its Policies and Procedures were approved by SIEC on August 17, 2010.

1.4 References

This document references the following items:

Arizona Regional COML Recognition Procedure, available online at:

http://www.azgita.gov/psic/library/standards/Arizona_Regional_COML_Recognition_07202010.pdf.

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Arizona NIMS-CU Workgroup Policies and Procedures, available online at:

http://www.azgita.gov/psic/library/coml/NIMS-CU_Policies_and_Procedures.pdf.

Federal Department of Homeland Security Office of Emergency Communications (OEC)'s Communications Unit Leader (COML) Implementation Best Practices Guide, available online at:

http://www.azgita.gov/psic/library/coml/coml_best_practices.pdf.

1.5 Administration

The PSIC Office, with advice from the SIEC NIMS-CU Workgroup, and in partnership with ADEM, is responsible for administering this Arizona Communications Unit Training Coordination Procedure.

1.6 Document Terminology

The terms "shall," "must," "will," and "required" are used throughout this document to indicate required parameters and to differentiate from recommended parameters. Recommendations are identified by the words "should," "desirably" and "preferably."

1.7 Updates & Revisions

The PSCC/SIEC will review and update this document as needed. Those wishing to submit requested revisions or additions to this document should send their requests to psic@azgita.gov or to the PSIC Office, Government Information Technology Agency at 100 N 15th Avenue, Suite 440, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

2 Training Course Information

2.1 COML

In accordance with Arizona's established COML Recognition Program, to be recognized as an Arizona Regional COML, eligible individuals must complete a federally recommended Training Course. DHS OEC utilizes a curriculum offering NIMS-compliant COML instruction. The COML Course is based on a three-day, 24-hour curriculum and is led by two trained and federally recognized Instructors. The course is being expanded to a four-day curriculum shortly.

2.2 COMT

To be recognized as a COMT, eligible individuals must complete a federally recommended Training Course. DHS OEC utilizes a curriculum offering NIMS-compliant COMT instruction. The COMT Course is a five-day course led by two trained and federally recognized Instructors. Arizona does not yet have a COMT Recognition program but plans to develop one in 2011.

2.3 Communications Unit TtT

To be recognized as a Communications Unit TtT (Train the Trainer) Instructor, eligible individuals must complete a federally recommended Training Course. DHS OEC utilizes a curriculum offering NIMS-compliant instruction. The Communications Unit Train-the-Trainer (TtT) Course is a single day course designed to train persons with the knowledge, background and expertise to become Instructors of the COML Course. In addition to attending the COM TtT

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Course, an individual interested in being recognized by OEC as an Instructor must serve as an adjunct Instructor (“Instructor in training”) with an experienced OEC approved Instructor and must have a Task Book signed off by that Instructor.

3 Course Instructor Information

Communications Unit Training Instructors must be OEC approved. Further, in order to provide greater capacity at the lowest possible cost, Instructors shall be Arizona based whenever possible.

3.1 COML

To qualify as a COML Course Instructor candidate, an individual must:

1. Be recognized by the State as an All-Hazards COML (Arizona Regional COML).
2. Be approved by the Arizona Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) as an Instructor candidate.
3. Successfully complete a federally recommended COML TtT Course.
4. Serve as an Instructor in training with a lead Instructor for at least one COML Course.
5. Have their Instructor Task Book signed by the lead Instructor they teach the COML Course with.

3.2 COMT

To qualify as a COMT Course Instructor candidate, an individual must:

1. Once an Arizona COMT Recognition program is developed, be recognized by the State as an All-Hazards COMT (Arizona Regional COMT).
2. Be approved by the Arizona Statewide Interoperability Coordinator (SWIC) as an Instructor candidate.
3. Successfully complete a federally recommended COMT TtT Course.
4. Serve as an Instructor in training with a lead Instructor for at least one COMT Course.
5. Have their Instructor Task Book signed by the lead Instructor they teach the COMT Course with.

3.3 Communications Unit TtT

To qualify as a Communications Unit TtT Course Instructor, an individual must meet the requirements established by OEC.

4 Developing a Group of Arizona Instructors

In an effort to develop a local Arizona group of OEC approved Instructors, all All-Hazards Communications Unit Courses must be offered with the condition that the lead Instructor will use an Instructor in training who has successfully met the prerequisites outlined in Section 3 above on a first come, first served basis. At least one Instructor in training will be used for each

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COML Course. The lead Instructor will contact the PSIC Office to identify if there are any eligible Instructor in training candidates. If the PSIC Office states that there are no eligible candidates, this requirement will not apply.

5 Course Documentation

At the conclusion of each Communications Unit Training Course, OEC or their designee currently provides a Certificate of Completion to each student and to the student's State Administrative Agency (SAA). Arizona's SAA – the Arizona Department of Homeland Security (AZDOHS) – will forward copies of all students' Certificates of Completion to the PSIC Office for record keeping.

6 Communications Unit Training Requests and Inquiries

6.1 Communications Unit Training Request

A County interested in sponsoring a Communications Unit Training Course should contact the Arizona Division of Emergency Management (ADEM). ADEM will then notify the PSIC Office.

In the event an agency provides their own Communications Unit Training, the agency is required to notify the PSIC Office. The PSIC Office shall work with agencies that provide their own Communications Unit Training to incorporate the use of Instructors in training in those courses.

6.2 Class Notification List

Individuals interested in attending a Communications Unit Training class should sign up online at <http://www.azgita.gov/psic/library/coml/training.htm> to be notified about upcoming COML Training Courses. Once a course is scheduled, the ADEM class registry will be used by individuals who wish to sign up for the class on a first come, first served basis.

7 Communications Unit Training Coordination

7.1 Course Funding

There are many methods of procuring a Communications Unit Training Course:

- A. A County wishing to use funds administered by ADEM may request any Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved course through ADEM. [Note: Currently the COML Course is FEMA approved but approval of other Communications Unit Courses is planned.]
- B. Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) or other Homeland Security grants may be requested for Communications Unit Courses as these courses are part of Arizona's Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan (SCIP) strategic initiative #10.
- C. The PSIC Office may request a Technical Assistance (TA) offering for a training course through the DHS OEC Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program

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(ICTAP). Only 5 TA requests may be submitted annually for all technical assistance (i.e., workshops, assessments, consulting, etc.) of every type and usually few TAs are granted than requested.

- D. An agency can use training funds from any other source to fund the course.

7.2 Communications Unit Training Course Coordination

The following steps apply only to Communications Unit training request utilizing grant funds administered by ADEM under section 7.1A above. [Note: ***This is a proposed procedure pending guidance from the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) and ADEM Director***; The rest of this Document applies to all Communications Unit Training however procured.]:

1. Required documentation shall be submitted to ADEM by the requesting agency for funding approval.
2. The PSIC Office may consult with ADEM and the local requesting agency to determine whether training in that location will be attended at a sufficient level to justify a course offering based on past attendance, expressions of interest for additional courses and other courses planned from other funding sources.
3. ADEM shall complete a call for Instructors using the OEC approved Instructor list with preference given to use of Arizona Instructors. The call to Instructors shall specify that the OEC approved lead Instructor must use an Instructor in training for the course and that individual will be selected from eligible candidates by the PSIC Office.
4. ADEM shall consult with the PSIC Office to review the responses to the call for Instructors to select one or two Course Instructors that have the appropriate skill set for the requested course.
5. If there are eligible candidates, the PSIC Office shall contact and arrange for the qualified individual(s) to serve as Instructor(s) in training for the course.
6. The Communications Unit Training Course shall be coordinated and scheduled in accordance with availability, course and contract requirements.
7. Course enrollment will be managed through the Event Registration and Management Application (ERMA).
8. The Training Provider shall conduct the contracted Communications Unit Training Course. A participant list shall be available to the PSIC Office through ERMA.
9. Successful completion by participants shall be recognized and documented (see Course Documentation section).

8 Issues

Any concerns regarding the operation of this procedure will be directed to the PSIC Office (psic@azgita.gov) and if the concerns persist to the SIEC NIMS-CU Workgroup (contacted through the PSIC Office) for review and recommendation.